

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Rolling Stock

EVALUATE

1. The figure for all types of freight rolling stock was given in February 1947 as 6,400 which included 65 refrigerator cars. This number has been increased by the repair of 5,800 cars. The major part of this work was done at the Drenovo and Gorna Orehovitza workshops. The figure for 1943 was 16,109 for all types (8,765 open cars, 7,211 closed, and 133 tankers). Large parks of damaged rolling stock may be seen at Sofia, Plovdiv, Gorna Orehovitza, Kazanlik, Pernik; and nearly every station has a siding of obsolete cars.
2. The passenger rolling stock park was reported, again in February 1947, to consist of 1,100 coaches of all types. This figure has apparently been little increased since then. In 1943, the total non-freight rolling stock was 1,412 (963 coaches, 84 mail cars, 365 baggage cars - these latter are often used for passengers on local trains).

Equipment

3. Signal equipment appears to be manual, except for the Sofia - Pernik and Sofia - Mezdra lines. Signal equipment is of German make, the electric equipment being made by Siemens.
4. Telegraph equipment in the Sofia area is made by Siemens and Halske. Telegraph lines are beside the track and carried on wooden poles.
5. Remote-controlled electric equipment (for switching) appears to be only in use in part of Sofia and Plovdiv yards and in the junctions of Cherven-Breg, Gorna Orehovitz, and Drenovo. Remote-controlled manual switching gears are used in most large stations, but on the spot manual operation is current in small stations and passing points.

Network

6. The main line of international importance is the Belgrade-Dragoman-Sofia-Plovdiv-Svilengrad-Istanbul line, used by the Simplon-Orient Express.
7. The remainder of the system can be divided into two main sections, one north of the Balkan mountain range and the other south of it. A subsidiary

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NO CHANGE in Class. ☐

☐ DECLASSIFIED

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section, and an important one strategically, is that of the Struma Valley.

✓ 8. The Balkan mountains are crossed by only two lines, Sofia - Mezdra and Gorna Orehovitsa - Dubovo, and circumvented by one line, Shumen - Karnobat. As a result these lines are greatly overworked and even in time of need could not take more than a slightly increased traffic. This dangerous bottle-neck is well known, and the old German plan for a trans-Balkan line from Lovech to Karlovo is being included in the new Five Year Plan. The first section, Lovech to Troyan, has already been built by Youth Brigades, but no doubt will need a lot of improving before it is able to carry normal traffic.

✓ 9. As the lines are single track throughout most of the country and as passing points are manually operated, this heavy traffic puts the system under a great strain. Maintenance is not carried out soon enough for fear of causing too much dislocation to the system, so that when it is finally decided to do any maintenance, it takes far longer than necessary. As an example of this tendency is the disaster at Gara Lakatnik on the Sofia - Mezdra line in June 1948, when the whole track collapsed with heavy loss of life. The damage is not yet fully repaired.

✓ 10. The Sofia - Ikhtiman - Plovdiv section is also overworked, particularly between Sofia and Gara Belovo owing to the need for double heading.

✓ 11. When the new Sofia - Volyunk - Pernik line is in running order it will help to take the load off the Sofia - Vladaya - Pernik line, which at present handles nearly all the coal traffic (the remainder goes by road) from the mines at Pernik to the capital, and the Kurilo thermic power station.

12. All lines from Sofia require, except for the lightest of trains, double heading, and heavy-freight trains on the Sofia - Plovdiv or Pernik - Sofia lines often have a third engine pushing at the tail of the train. Double heading is also needed on the trans-Balkan lines.

✓ Workshops.

✓ 13. There are no locomotive factories in Bulgaria, although the Sofia locomotive repair shops, now known as the Georgi Dimitrov Locomotive Works, have just assembled their first locomotive, a 2-8-0 tanker, from imported parts to a Hanomag design.

✓ 14. The main locomotive shops are at Sofia, Pernik, Chervenbreg, Gorna Orehovitsa, Ruse and Plovdiv.

✓ 15. Rolling stock is built (although in the past the majority was imported) and repaired in the same shops as the locomotives and also in special shops at Drenovo, Stara Zagora, Karlovo and Rakovski.

16. Only two breakdown cranes are known to exist. One of 15 tons is kept at Gara Pedusna, Sofia, and the other, of 25 tons, at Gorna Orehovitsa. Jacks and rollers appear to be normally used for re-railing. Great ingenuity was used to re-rail an engine which crashed into the Isker River on the Sofia - Mezdra line recently. A siding was laid from the main line down the bank into the river and under the water to the side of the engine, which was then lifted with jacks onto the track and towed back by two engines on to the main line.

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